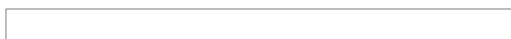




The President's Daily Brief

December 10, 1975


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LATE ITEM


Baucau, the second largest city in
Portuguese Timor, fell to Indonesian
forces this morning.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

December 10, 1975

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Areas of Heavy Fighting

Beirut, Lebanon



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LEBANON

Radical Muslim forces have gained control of some previously contested ground during the heavy fighting in Beirut this week. The leftists, who occupied the St. Georges Hotel on Monday, still hold it this morning. Army troops control the Phoenicia and the Holiday Inn.

The Christian and Muslim combatants as well as the Lebanese security forces are trying to gain control of the hotels in order to gain a commanding field of fire over the adjoining neighborhoods. Right-wing Phalangist militiamen suffered heavy casualties when their Muslim opponents moved in heavy weapons, including anti-aircraft guns supplied by the fedayeen.

The Phalangists, who claimed last night to have made gains in other areas, are holding out along a front that extends from the hotel district to Beirut port. They use this corridor to supply their forces in the hotel district from more secure Phalangist strongholds south of the port.

The leftist forces are led by Ibrahim Qulaylat, a radical Lebanese Muslim backed by Libya and some Palestinian fedayeen groups. His Independent Nass-erite Movement has some 400-500 militiamen and can draw on substantial backing from rejectionist Palestinians, radicals within the major fedayeen groups, and Lebanese communists.

Qulaylat yesterday repeated charges that Lebanese army troops were firing on Muslim forces and said his followers would retaliate. According to press reports from Beirut, several army vehicles were fired on by Muslim and Palestinian forces, and at least two army commandos were killed.

Lebanon's political leaders so far have come up with nothing to end the renewed fighting. The best hope is that the leftists--who are claiming victory--will convince themselves that their limited military gains constitute sufficient revenge

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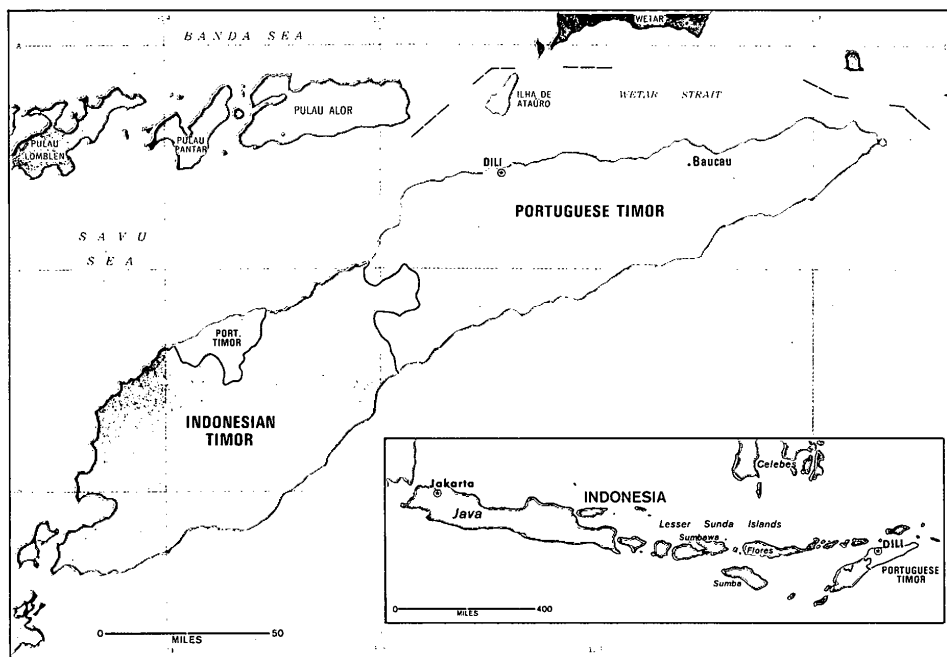
for the murder of Muslims by Phalangists last weekend. Interior Minister Shamun is threatening to resign, and leftists are criticizing the government's use of the army to try to restore some order.

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The Id al-Adha Muslim holiday that starts late this week may provide an excuse for both sides to stop the fighting.

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INDONESIA - PORTUGUESE TIMOR

An Indonesian task force is assembling off the east coast of Portuguese Timor in preparation for an attack on Baucau, the second largest city in the Portuguese half of the island.

The assault will probably be similar to that against Dili earlier this week, when marines went ashore following a naval and air bombardment. Airborne troops may also participate in the attack. The capture of Dili last Sunday was generally well executed, although elements of the Indonesian task force had problems coordinating their attack against the city.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's carefully orchestrated campaign to convince world opinion that military intervention in Timor was justified is running into difficulty, in part because of the unexpectedly strong reaction from Portugal.

Jakarta claims that it had to act to restore an orderly decolonization process in Timor because the Portuguese had abdicated responsibility for the colony's future. Lisbon has broken relations with Indonesia, and the Portuguese foreign minister has branded Jakarta's actions an "unqualified act of armed aggression." Lisbon may be speaking for Portuguese domestic consumption, but more importantly because it wishes to remain on good terms with its former African colonies, which are in the forefront of those criticizing Jakarta. The Portuguese statements, nonetheless, will give encouragement to Indonesia's other antagonists.

Jakarta probably would like to follow the same procedure in Timor that it used in 1969 with the former Dutch territory of West New Guinea, which was incorporated into Indonesia after an Indonesian-managed plebiscite was held under UN auspices. Indonesia, before Sunday's invasion, already had sponsored a resolution in the UN decolonization committee calling on the administering power in Timor to create conditions leading to self-determination for the Timorese people.

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Although the resolution was directed originally at the Portuguese, Jakarta evidently expected that once its own control was established, the UN committee would merely substitute Indonesia for Portugal. Now, however, several members of the decolonization committee, pressed by former Portuguese colonies in Africa, are sponsoring amendments to the resolution that will condemn Indonesian aggression against Timor. At the same time, Portugal itself has asked for a Security Council session to consider Indonesian aggression.

Most members of the international community would probably prefer not to stand up and be counted on the issue. Whether or not Indonesia's opponents will be able to do more than cause Jakarta temporary embarrassment probably will depend on how quickly Indonesian troops can restore order and create a stable administration in Timor.

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GREECE-CYPRUS

The Greek and Cypriot governments do not like the recent Turkish proposals for the resumption of intercommunal talks but have kept the door open for discussions at the NATO ministerial meetings this week in Brussels.

Both Greece and Cyprus were unenthusiastic over Ankara's suggestion to broaden the talks to include Greek and Turkish representatives. The Greeks clearly prefer to avoid direct involvement in talks that can only result in a settlement unfavorable to the Greek Cypriots.

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Cypriot Foreign Minister Christophides told Ambassador Crawford yesterday that progress on resumption of the talks hinges on Ankara's willingness to accept some link between the negotiations and previous UN resolutions. According to Christophides, such linkage could be established by a continued role for UN Secretary General Waldheim in the talks--an issue on which the Turks have indicated some flexibility. Christophides also noted that no settlement will be possible if the Turks insist on retaining the Greek Cypriot section of Famagusta.

The Cyprus problem may be further complicated on Friday when the Security Council begins deliberations on an extension of the mandate for the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus. Angry at the resolution favoring the Greek Cypriots adopted in the General Assembly last month, the Turkish Cypriots at one point threatened to oust the force from their zone and have already sharply curtailed its humanitarian activities.

At Ankara's request, Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash has toned down his attacks on the force. Turkey will apparently insist that the UN make a separate agreement with the Turkish Cypriot administration on the force's role in the Turkish Cypriot zone.

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The Makarios government is opposed to a change in the wording of the force's mandate and will call on the Security Council to endorse the recent Assembly resolution on Cyprus. Indications are, however, that the two sides will reach a compromise.

In a related event, Denktash, at Ankara's request, has indefinitely postponed holding elections and a referendum on the question of independence for the Turkish Cypriot zone.

USSR

Georgy Arbatov, Moscow's most prominent academic authority on the US, last week offered Ambassador Stoessel his latest views on bilateral relations.

Arbatov's views, frequently and freely conveyed to Americans, are often plainly self-serving. He apparently enjoys Brezhnev's confidence as a substantive expert, however, and is evidently attuned to the mood in Moscow. On occasion, as in his recent article in *Izvestia* against Western critics of Soviet behavior, Arbatov seems to serve as a quasi-official conduit for points his patrons want made to the US.

During his conversation with our ambassador, Arbatov predicted that Soviet detente policy would be reaffirmed at the party congress next February. He said, however, that criticisms are being heard in the USSR and that there have been "discussions" about detente within the Soviet leadership. He implied that Moscow is closely following the increased criticism of detente in the US, especially as the issue showed signs of becoming a center of debate in the US election campaigns.

Arbatov acknowledged that there is uncertainty about who will be the leaders in both the US and the USSR a year from now. He was careful to point out, however, that Brezhnev is in "good shape" and will definitely be around for a while. Arbatov advised that both sides ought to strive for as much bilateral progress as possible under the present leaderships, succession uncertainties notwithstanding. He singled out SALT as one "central" issue on which both sides could and should show flexibility "before it is too late."

Responding to a comment about Soviet involvement in Angola, Arbatov observed blandly that differences between Moscow and Washington would inevitably arise, but argued that these problems should not prevent progress in other areas.

CHINA-ANGOLA

The Chinese are maintaining a policy of strict neutrality toward conflicting forces in Angola. Peking's approach--for the short term at least--is one of opposition to the USSR's support for the Popular Movement. There is no evidence of any significant resumption of covert Chinese assistance to the National Front and National Union.

As long as other outside powers continue to shoulder the burden of military assistance to the opponents of the Soviet-backed Popular Movement, China can be expected to maintain a low profile with its former clients.

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Although evidence is lacking, Peking may have reached agreement [redacted]

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[redacted] to divert to Angola certain types of equipment [redacted]

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[redacted] as long as Peking is left with a plausible case for denying any direct role of its own. [redacted]

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The prospect that the Organization of African Unity may reverse its policy of neutrality toward the civil conflict in Angola or that OAU members may decide to go separate ways on the subject must concern the Chinese. Peking is already on the opposite side of the fence from Tanzania, Mozambique, Romania, Yugoslavia, and North Korea as well as a number of other states that have followed Moscow's lead in extending formal recognition to the Popular Movement. A decision by the OAU to waffle on Angola would almost certainly lead to wider African and Third World recognition for the Movement.

The Popular Movement, for its part, has carefully avoided closing the door to future ties with Peking by avoiding direct attacks on the Chinese. The Movement's second in command has specifically

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stated that his group has resisted Soviet pressures to take sides in the broader Sino-Soviet ideological dispute. There are no signs, however, that Peking is seriously considering switching its political support. On the contrary, the expanded Soviet and Cuban role can only have darkened Chinese views of the Movement.

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[redacted]
[redacted] a proposal for an emergency summit session on the Angolan problem has now been approved by the required two thirds of the OAU members. [redacted]

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[redacted] a preliminary foreign ministers' meeting to convene in Addis Ababa on December 19 to set the date and agenda for the summit. The summit itself, however, apparently is not likely to be held until after the first of the year.

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